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Thomas Paine

The Patriot

By A. OUTRAM SHERMAN



A. Outram Sherman

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AN ADDRESS BY
A. OUTRAM SHERMAN



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THOMAS PAINE, THE PATRIOT

A PATRIOT is defined as one who loves his country, and the distinction has been generally won by those who have borne arms and risked life, liberty and property for such a noble sentiment. All this Thomas Paine did, and more; he not only risked but suffered in life and liberty and gave his property without stint. The common virtue of physical bravery was his also but he counted as trifling and ordinary duty his acts of bravery while bearing arms. As his heroism was more complete, more glorious, his patriotism was broader, deeper, more intense,—great as his country, which was the world. He fought the battles of mankind with his mighty pen. Wherever tyranny and oppression stood against liberty, justice, and the rights of man, he advanced with his potent weapon, not from security nor by stealth but in the open where the vengeance of the mighty sought ever to tear him down. England's proud navy ploughed up and down the ocean in impotent rage for years with the one object of capturing this man who had made her king tremble on his throne. Paine's life-long friend and patron who introduced him to America was the great patriot—Benjamin Franklin—who loved America because here he had won recognition, honor and advancement in life, but Paine came to her while she was in distress, he owed her nothing, but her misery roused his love. Franklin said to him: "Where liberty is, there is my country." Paine replied: "Where liberty is not, there is mine," and his whole life proves he spoke truly. "Perhaps America would feel the less obligation to me," he said, "did she know that it was neither the place nor the people but the cause itself that irresistibly engaged me in its support; for I should have acted the same part in any other country could the same circumstances have arisen there which have happened here." This declaration he made before he had finished his service for American independence; he

proved that it was no idle boast for thereafter he aroused England "through the channels of the press," which he declared to be "the tongue of the world," by his Rights of Man. France, however, became aflame for liberty and thither he rushed to fan the fire that already burned too fast and soon consumed friends and foes alike and in its fury nearly annihilated him.

But this wonderful man, seemed never to allow injury to himself to stay his efforts to accomplish his aim, which was to thwart tyranny and oppression in every direction and to establish the principles of human liberty and progress. To spread knowledge of such principles was his great object. "Ignorance is of a peculiar nature;" he wrote "once dispelled it is impossible to re-establish it. It is not originally a thing of itself, but is only the absence of knowledge, and though a man may be kept ignorant, he cannot be made ignorant. * * There does not exist in the compass of language an arrangement of words to express so much as the means of effecting * * an obliteration of knowledge, and it has never yet been discovered how to make a man unknow his knowledge, or unthink his thoughts. * * Already the conviction that government by representation is the true system of government is spreading itself fast in the world," he declared as he prepared to leave France, and wrote: "An army of principles will penetrate where an army of soldiers cannot; it will succeed where diplomatic management would fail; it is neither the Rhine, the Channel, nor the ocean that can arrest its progress; it will march on the horizon of the world, and it will conquer."

I will strive to show, briefly, as I must, how Paine marshalled such an army; how he armed it with unanswerable arguments; how he lead it in attack against entrenched and fortified error; how, with the sword of sarcasm, the dagger of ridicule, the poniard of wit he hurled his army against established oppression and hereditary rule, how his principles conquered and how they penetrated, as he declared they would, into every land; how his army is still marching on, and how today it has reached, as he prophesied, the horizon of the world,—for China is now considering a constitutional government, the establishment of which by all mankind, it was Paine's first and life-long endeavor to promote.

It will be possible in this short paper to mention, only in

the briefest manner, the many achievements of "Paine the patriot" and if I can rouse your interest enough to lead you to read his life, as written by the late historian Moncure D. Conway, I shall be well satisfied. That scholarly and impartial book will give you an entirely different idea of the man, concerning whom the author writes: "The educated ignorance is astounding." Paine's relentless attacks upon old authorities in power, and officials that he thought in the wrong brought him most powerful enemies who found ready agents in his religious opponents to revenge them upon his memory; Thomas Jefferson, between whom and Paine there was an unbroken mutual admiration, said that Paine's political enemies were his bitterest. The first life of Thomas Paine to appear after his death was written by a man, who was defendant in a suit for libel brought by Paine against him and which was pending at the time of Paine's death. This book, in the main a barefaced falsehood, most cunningly, most cruelly concocted to blight his fame has been quoted and copied into histories. Deeds of charity and noble self-denial are therein made to appear crimes. Here in our county Bolton, the historian of Paine's last home community, mentions with a sneer an act of Paine's which if truly stated was more than what Christ described as: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Warned of his danger; told it would mean his death, conscious of the guillotine's incessant falling on victim after victim guilty of nothing but of incurring Robespierre's anger, in the presence of that murderer and the blood-thirsty crew of the French convention in uproar, demanding Louis XVI's head, Thomas Paine thus offers his life not for his own friend but for the friend of our country by opposing the death of Louis. "Ah, Citizens, give not the tyrant of England," he said, "the triumph of seeing the man perish on the scaffold who had aided my much-loved America to break his chains!" Friends and neighbors—all that your children have been told of this act of almost sublime nobility, by a resident of this town and county, in our local history is this: "He was a companion of the detested Robespierre and was on the trial of the innocent Louis XVI." As well, as truthfully, as fairly say, "Washington was a companion of the traitor Benedict Arnold and was connected with the trial of the unfortunate Andre."



THOMAS PAINE.

Thomas Paine was born in Thetford, England, January 27, 1737, of Quaker parentage. It is surprising that it was possible for him to acquire the broad knowledge and clear insight into the wide range of subjects that his writings and inventions prove he possessed, when we consider the poverty and severe struggles of his youth. He was removed from school at the age of thirteen to be taught the trade of a stay-maker and he was afterwards an excise man. From this office he was dismissed for irregularity in reporting on importations without actually surveying the articles but in his petition for restoration to office, which was granted, he stated: "No complaint of the least dishonesty or intemperance ever appeared against me." He championed the cause of his fellow excisemen and sought to petition Parliament in their behalf. While thus engaged he was removed again for "quitting his business without leave." Though no dishonor is to be attached to his conduct, you will find his libelers ignoring the records and stating that he was dismissed for dishonesty. While in London he had an opportunity to study the workings of Government. He met there Goldsmith and Benjamin Franklin. The latter recognizing his ability, induced him to go to America, giving him a letter of introduction to his son-in-law.

Once in America, Paine's inborn love of liberty, his almost quixotic desire to right every wrong that afflicted mankind was roused into action by the opportunity the discontent of the American Colonies against Great Britain afforded. Let me, from his writings take extracts to show how his mind worked, stirred by his heart beating for his fellow men, yet always controlled by logic and almost mathematical exactness to the laws of justice. He writes in *First Principles of Government*: "It is by tracing things to their origin that we learn to understand them; and it is by keeping that line and that origin always in view that we never forget them," and again, "Rights become duties by reciprocity. The right which I enjoy becomes my duty to guarantee it to another and he to me" and "He that would make his own liberty secure, must guard even his enemy from oppression, for if he violates this duty, he establishes a precedent that will reach to himself," and "when all other rights are taken away, the right of rebellion is made perfect."

In conformity to his reason and his fairness, Paine's first

essay, "Justice and Humanity" was an appeal for the abolition of slavery throughout the colonies. He asks them "with what consistency or decency they complain so loudly of attempts to enslave them, while they hold so many hundreds in slavery." Thus he was the first Abolitionist. He soon afterwards partly drew and signed the Pennsylvania Act abolishing slavery.

Next we find him writing: "If we take a survey of ages and of countries, we shall find the women, almost without exception—at all times and in all places, adored and oppressed * * affronted in one country by polygamy, which gives them their rivals for inseparable companions; enslaved in another by indissoluble ties, which often join the gentle to the rude, and sensibility to brutality. Even in countries where they may be esteemed most happy, constrained in their desires in the disposal of their goods, robbed of freedom of will by the laws, the slaves of opinion, which rules them with absolute sway. Such, I am sorry to say is the lot of women over the whole earth." Before his mighty plea for freedom of government, he made an appeal for the lowly negro, and he sought to elevate to her true station the better half of humanity. Two principles of justice he armed and enlisted in his army of principles. One has already conquered, one still is fighting on.

On October 18, 1775, writing again of Great Britain's introduction of slavery into the colonies he declares, "when I reflect on these, I hesitate not for a moment to believe that the Almighty will finally separate America from Britain. Call it Independence or what you will, it is the cause of God and humanity. It will go on. And when the Almighty shall have blest us, and made us a people dependent only upon Him, then may our first gratitude be shown by an act of continental legislation, which shall put a stop to the importation of negroes for sale, soften the hard fate of those already here, and in time procure their freedom." This was the earliest anticipation of the Declaration of Independence eight months before July 4, 1776, but it was more,—it was the anticipation of the Proclamation of Emancipation eighty-six years before Lincoln issued it. We glory, as well we may, in the great Declaration of our fathers of their freedom, but if they had coupled with it the grant of freedom to their bondsmen, what added lustre would have enshrined the names of the old thirteen colonies, what

suffering humanity would have been spared, what sorrow, blood and treasure would have been saved!

Through these writings, Paine had become known. Edmund Randolph, our first Attorney General, who had been on Washington's staff at the beginning of the war, and conducted much of his correspondence, ascribed Independence primarily to George III. but next to "Thomas Paine, an Englishman by birth, and possessing an imagination which happily combined political topics, poured forth in a style hitherto unknown on this side of the Atlantic, from the ease with which it insinuated itself into the hearts of the people who were unlearned, or of the learned."

On January 10, 1776, Paine issued his great pamphlet "Common Sense." The unanimous testimony of every contemporary of his proves that the effect of this document has never been paralleled in literary history. Washington wrote on receiving a copy "A few more such flaming arguments as were exhibited at Falmouth and Norfolk added to the sound doctrine and unanswerable reasoning contained in the pamphlet 'Common Sense' will leave numbers at a loss to decide upon the propriety of separation."

Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, wrote of Paine's political writings: "They burst from the press with an effect that has rarely been produced by type and paper in any age or country. Gen. Lee said: "He has genius in his eyes," and "I own he has convinced me." Joseph Hawley writes (February 18, 1776, to Eldridge Gerry): "I have read the pamphlet, entitled, 'Common Sense, Addressed to the Inhabitants of America,' and every sentiment has sunk into my well-prepared heart." Franklin said: "It has had a prodigious effect." Ramsay the historian said: "He deserves a statue of gold." John Adams writes to his wife: "I sent you a pamphlet entitled 'Common Sense,' written in vindication of doctrines, which there is reason to expect, that the further encroachments of tyranny and depredations of oppression will soon make the common faith." That brilliant woman, after the receipt of the pamphlet, wrote: "'Common Sense,' like a ray of revelation, has come in season to clear our doubts and fix our choice." John Winthrop said: "If Congress should adopt its sentiments, it would satisfy the people." "Colonel Gadsden brought the

first copy of 'Common Sense' into Congress March 8th," says Hazelton in his late history, "and boldly declared himself in favor of Independence." The members had no thought of it and his statement came like an "explosion of thunder." Adam's "Life of Gallatin" says: "It is now almost forgotten that Thomas Paine in 1787, before he went to Paris, was a fashionable member of society, admired and courted as the greatest literary genius of the day." Samuel Adams wrote to Paine: "Your 'Common Sense' and your 'Crisis' unquestionably awaked the public mind and led the people loudly to call for a declaration of our national independence. I therefore esteem you as a warm friend to the liberty—and lasting welfare of the human race."

James Madison wrote Washington concerning Paine: "Should it finally appear that the merits of the man, whose writings have so much contributed to infuse and foster the spirit of Independence in the people of America, are unable to inspire them with a just beneficence, the world it is to be feared, will give us as little credit for our policy as for our gratitude in this particular." The Constitutional Gazette of February 24, 1776 declared: "The pamphlet entitled 'Common Sense' is indeed a wonderful production. It is completely calculated for the meridian of North America. The author introduces a new system of politics as widely different from the old, as the Copernican system is to the Ptolemaic. The blood wantonly spilt by the British troops at Lexington gave birth to this extraordinary performance, which contains as surprising a discovery in politics as the works of Sir Isaac Newton do in philosophy.

"This animated piece dispels, with irresistible energy, the prejudice of the mind against the doctrine of independence, and pours in upon it such an inundation of light and truth, as will produce an instantaneous and marvelous change of temper in the views and feeling of an American."

Those of you who have never read Paine's "Common Sense" have skipped the Genesis of America's Bible, and when you study the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of these United States you are reading largely a repetition of his thoughts, an embodiment of his ideas, the execution of his suggestions, for the plan and ground work of both he enters into in "Common Sense." He suggested the method of

calling the Constitutional Convention and many of the principles therein adopted. Indeed it is extraordinary the field he covered in this famous pamphlet and ideas there advanced, often quoted by others, have been credited to them as their original thoughts. For instance he wrote: "As Europe is our market for trade, we ought to form no partial connection with any part of it. It is the true interest of America to steer clear of European contentions." Washington in his farewell address used nearly these same words, and it has become a text for our public speakers who credit it to Washington, never to its real author.

By letters in the press Paine supported his first pamphlet from attack, with more burning arguments, encouraging the faltering, stirring the dormant into patriotic action. Then came the declaration, then came the war. "I am thus far a Quaker that I would gladly agree with all the world to lay aside the use of arms, and settle matters by negotiation; but unless the whole will, the matter ends and I take up my musket and thank Heaven he has put it in my power," he said, and he enlisted in the Flying Camp of ten thousand men who were to be sent wherever needed. The enlistment was a brief one and when it expired Paine at once enlisted again and was appointed Aide de Camp under General Greene. Continually under fire, signal acts of bravery are recorded of him. Rowing in an open boat during a cannonade from Fort Mercer to Fort Mifflin is one. He was with Washington at Valley Forge. Marching by night and day he still wielded his weapon, the pen, so much mightier than his sword. While bearing all the burden of the soldier he wrote his *Crisis*. It was read by Washington's order, to every Corporal's Guard in the army and those bare-foot and disheartened soldiers listened to the words not as coming from an agitator writing in security and seclusion, but from a comrade, whom they knew was bearing the brunt and danger with themselves. "These are the times that try men's souls," a tried soul had written, and their roused spirits cheered the man, as well as his immortal words. I cannot go into detail. Read them, the thirteen *Crises* of Paine. By Washington the orders were given, Paine inspired his followers to obey.

April 17, 1777 Congress elected Paine Secretary to the Com-





Recent photograph of the Paine Monument, on North Street, New Rochelle, very near the original grave and not far from the Paine House on its new site. (Photo by courtesy of W. H. Van der Weyde, New York.)

mittee of Foreign Affairs, beside which he undertook to report to the Pennsylvania Council intelligence of Washington's army, and keeping up his literary work besides, he still found time to write constantly to members of Congress on many subjects. The Silas Deane incident, which led to Paine's resignation of his secretaryship of the Foreign Relations Committee, though it detracts from his ability as a diplomat, which in fact he was not, and by his temperament never could have been, does not reflect on his nobleness of character, but rather brings into relief the simple truthfulness of his nature. The whole incident about which volumes have been written is not to this day clear. A million lires had been paid to Beaumarchais before Deane reached France and six months before Franklin arrived there. Beaumarchais confided the fact to Arthur Lee, the secret agent of Congress in London and also the fact that it was to appear as a commercial transaction and it was to be reported that tobacco would be paid for the advance. Lee so understood and informed Paine. Beaumarchais afterwards attempted to actually collect and Deane tried to aid him.

That the advance was a gift, was to be kept a secret even from the body of Congress, to protect the French King from the charge of breaking his treaty arrangement with England. Paine by his oath of office was sworn to disclose no matter, the knowledge of which was acquired in consequence of his office, "that he shall be directed to keep secret." Concerning this matter he had received no such instruction, and when Silas Deane rushed into print in support of himself and Beaumarchais, Paine replied stating the facts as he knew them. The French Minister at once appealed to Congress to save Louis from embarrassment with England. Congress summoned Paine and asked him one question: "Did you write this article?" On his replying that he was the author, he was asked to retire from the hearing. He wrote demanding that he be heard further. "I have obtained fame, honor, and credit in this country. I am proud of these honors. * * they cannot be taken from me by unjust censure grounded on a concealed charge." The subject simply had to be kept quiet, Paine received no further hearing, Deane's friends moved his dismissal but this was voted against. He however sent in his resignation in writing, which is of record, but in spite of that fact, all his libelers state

that he was dismissed but the truth is indisputably as he stated in his letter of resignation: "As I came into office an honest man, I go out of it with the same character."

Though Paine was not allowed to disclose more before Congress M. Gerard, the French Minister, knew Paine's power and tried to retain him and offered him a salary, to employ his pen to impress the people in favor of France. M. Gerard wrote his superior in France: "You know too well the prodigious effect produced by the writings of this famous personage among the people of the States to cause me any fear of your disapproval of my resolution," which was to retain Paine, but Paine felt great repugnance at being in any way a paid writer. He afterward wrote of this incident and stated: "My answer to the offer was precisely in these words, 'any service I can render to either of the countries in alliance, or to both, I ever have done and shall readily do, and M. Gerard's esteem will be the only compensation I shall desire.'" This esteem however he did not get as the wily diplomat took offense and retaliated by misrepresenting Paine, and abusing him. Paine however, at once published the offer made to him.

According to English information Gerard himself was personally interested in the payment for the supplies and had private reasons for resisting Paine's theory of their gratuitous character. "Whatever might be thought of Paine's course in the Deane-Beaumarchais affair," writes Mr. Conway, "there could be no doubt that the country was saved from a questionable payment unjustly pressed at a time when it must have crippled the Revolution for which the French subsidies were given. Congress was relieved, and he who relieved it was the sufferer." Paine had lost the most important secretaryship but his patriotic interest continued, though he wrote to Henry Laurens, that at last he would have to think of himself as well as others, and he planned to publish his writings in two volumes. This was in 1779. During this year he wrote to the Press that if Great Britain should come to terms of peace "to leave the fisheries wholly out on any pretense whatever, is to sow the seed of another war." This man certainly had almost the power of prophecy. In 1783 he went to Rhode Island and carried on a campaign in the press there, to induce that state to pay the quota allotted to her by the Continental Congress

which she was withholding. Robert Morris and others induced him to undertake the mission and saw that he was paid. I have lately seen an unpublished autograph letter of Paine's written to Morris from Providence in which he states: "There is one idea which occurs very strongly to me, which will finally show the extreme ill policy of Rhode Island. The fisheries, in all probability will be the last and most difficult point to settle in a negociation and yet this foolish state, which has so great a dependence on them, is creating a necessity for closing with the best terms of peace that can be first obtained." The fisheries would be "the seeds of another war." It came. "The point would be last to be settled." As we are gathered here one hundred and seven years after he wrote this letter, our representatives are discussing this "last point" with England in a court of arbitration, another fond dream of Thomas Paine's. In his "Rights of Man" he records that Henry IV. of France whom he describes as "a man of enlarged and benevolent heart" suggested such a court in the year 1610. Paine discussed and enlarged the idea in his writings. The year 1779 was a year of poverty to the man whose writings were, the while, having a sale, to use his own words, which are verified by the evidence on every hand, "most rapid and extensive of anything that was ever published in this country, or perhaps any other. The single pamphlet 'Common Sense' would, at that time of day, have produced a tolerable fortune," but he gave it to his country without profit to himself. Finally however he was elected, at a small salary, Clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly, and the following year 1780, Washington's letter telling of the distress of his army, Paine read to the Assembly. Five hundred dollars was then due him in salary. He drew it, enclosed it in a letter on June 8, to M'Clenaghan advising others to subscribe and showing the wisdom it would be for the rich to do so. The subscription spread. Three hundred thousand pounds were raised and the bank founded, which was incorporated by Congress in December 21st following.

The financial power of America is now the greatest in the world, as her rivers whose mighty flow exceeds in volume when they reach the seas the floods of other lands, but the source of each, if we would find it, is hidden away in some pure

unnoticed spring, starting from the bosom of the hills up amid the clouds, and so the beginning of our great financial strength started from a pure, generous but forgotten act that sprang from the patriotic impulse in the heart of Thomas Paine.

In this year Paine wrote an article entitled "Public Good," in which he showed that the Virginia Colony was wrong in its contention as to public lands,. The truth and logic of his state-



PAINÉ HOUSE.

House built by Thomas Paine on the farm presented to him by the State of New York for his patriotic services.

ments were admitted even by Virginians, but later the politicians defeated a grant to him by that state in retaliation for his pointing out the error of their ways. Madison deplored this refusal to reward Paine in the letter to Washington from which I have quoted. Paine also this year wrote to the Count de Vergennes in France an account of America's distress for money and asked for French aid. This letter was shown to the French legation and led Congress to appoint Col. John Laurens, one of Washington's aids, to visit France. He agreed to go if Paine would accompany him. Paine consented. They

sailed from Boston in February 1784 and returned to that city August 25 with 2,500,000 livres in silver. Lamartine stated that the French King "loaded Paine with favors" and that the gift for America "was confided into the hands of Franklin and Paine." For this great service Paine never received any payment or acknowledgment. He conceived the plan and mainly executed it, for Laurens was a young man and came near ruining the venture by an imprudent advocacy, of which Vergennes complained, while ascribing it to his inexperience.

Pennsylvania gave Paine \$2,500, Congress \$3,800, and New York this farm of two hundred and seventy-five acres. Washington wrote to Richard H. Lee and Madison "unsolicited by and unknown to Mr. Paine" as he states, in behalf of a grant by Virginia to Paine. "His services," he wrote, "hitherto have past unnoticed * * Does not common justice then point to some compensation?" It is not possible to understand the value of Paine's labors at this day. His writings read even yet, stir the heart and inflame the imagination of an American. But the best evidence of their great value is the unequivocal and unanimous testimony of the greatest men of his times. Franklin put into his hands much material which that great character had gathered and asked him to write a history of our Revolution. This data and Paine's own collection of letters, which were the result of a correspondence with all the great men of England, France and America during most momentous times, was destroyed by fire years afterward at St. Louis. What a cruel loss was this! What secrets were confided then to flames, of which we speak in metaphor as having tongues. Ah, what a misnomer! Such tongues can never talk and in this case they have stricken history dumb.

It is not within my text to refer to Paine's inventive genius; his intimacy with the early experimenters in steam navigation; his priority of suggestion and his acquaintance with Henry and Fulton and Livingston; his letter on "the terms attraction of cohesion," which anticipated modern thought; his iron bridge; his planing machine. As the turbine principle of application of steam to the wheel in the steamboat was his idea of the proper theory, so always his thoughts seemed to run way beyond his age. In a letter to Jefferson in 1801, he discusses "for amusement" the means of generating motion for

mechanical uses and writes: "The thing wanted is something to contain the greatest quantity of power in the least quantity of weight. * * if the power which an ounce of gun powder contains could be detailed out so as to act with equal force thro' a given time as steam or water can be, it would be a most commodious natural power because of its small weight and little bulk * * might not gun powder be mixed with some other



Rear view of Paine House since it's removal to a spot within a few yards of Paine's grave.

material?" The explosive engines, which now drive machines over highways and waters and through the air, are the perfection of Paine's explosive power. Gun powder was the only familiar substance, and to others it represented only an agent of war, but Paine writes: "When I consider the wisdom of Nature I must think that she endowed matter with this extraordinary property for other purposes than that of destruction." For his confidence in her beneficence Nature seems to have whispered to him her secrets as Time unrolled to his discerning thoughts, tales she meant not to disclose to others for ages.

America was free. Paine was unembarrassed by pecuniary wants, "A fashionable member of society admired and courted as the greatest literary light of his day." But the world was his country and he must be ever stirring in its cause. He went to England and became intimate with Burke, America's friend, and with many men in public life. He then went to Paris. The French Revolution came on, he believed it would be productive of good. "I have seen enough of war to wish it might never more have existence in the world," he wrote Jefferson. Burke wrote a pamphlet against the French Revolution and in favor of monarchy. Paine took up his pen to reply and began his "Rights of Man." "From the part Burke took in the American Revolution it was natural I should consider him a friend of mankind." "The Rights of Man" is one of Paine's great master-pieces, full of wisdom and originality, it cuts to the quick the hereditary aristocracy. "There never did, there never will, and there cannot exist a Parliament of any description of men or any generation of men in any country, possessed of the right or the power of binding and controlling posterity to the end of time * * I am not contending for or against any form of government, nor for nor against any party, here or elsewhere. That which a whole nation chooses to do, it has a right to do!" Rousseau's writings had been studied by Paine as they had by most of the founders of this republic, as is evinced by numerous references found in the letters and documents of the times. But the "'Rights of Man' was the earliest complete statement of republican principles" in Mr. Conway's opinion.

England has since enacted into her laws some of the recommendations it contained.

England was in an uproar. By direction of the authorities the book was burned, its author also in effigy. The publisher was arrested and was to be tried for sedition. The hereditary title holders immediately called meetings to denounce Paine and his publisher. In one instance a Lord Onslow presided over a meeting of the gentry, he was a bed-chamber Lord, a sinecure paying 1,000 pounds with a pension of 3,000 pounds. Paine sent to the meeting a hundred copies of his book and as an illustration of the severity and cutting nature of his attacks when roused, let me quote an abstract from his letter to Lord Onslow: "What honor or happiness you can derive

from being the principal pauper of the neighborhood and occasioning a greater expense than the poor, the aged, and the infirm for ten miles round, I leave you to enjoy. At the same time I can see that it is no wonder you should be strenuous in suppressing a book which strikes at the root of these abuses."

But while royalty was aghast, the people sang:

"God save the Rights of Man!
Give him a heart to scan
Blessings so dear
Let them be spread around,
Wherever Man is found,
And with the welcome sound
Ravish his ear!

God save great Thomas Paine,
His Rights of Man proclaim
From pole to pole."

But France called him, he crossed the Channel and three departments elected him to represent them in the convention. I have mentioned his heroic stand to save the life of Louis XVI. "Kill the King," he said, "but save the Man." Gouverneur Morris was the American minister to France; it is a long story, how his secret instructions conflicted with Paine's hearty and open love for America's ally, how Morris virtually acquiesced in his imprisonment by Robespierre, as a foreigner, and how Morris misled Washington to believe he had demanded Paine's release as an American, how he misled Paine to believe that Washington had given no directions that Paine be so reclaimed.

These cruel subterfuges, on Morris's part, led Paine afterwards to write his severe and regrettable letter to Washington, who received it without understanding why it was addressed to him. So that these two great and good men, who had fought and worked in confidence and side by side for humanity, died misunderstanding each other, each distressed and puzzled at the other's conduct. Paine trusted Morris but the truth was as he said: "A treacherous friend in power is the most dangerous of enemies." For nearly eight months Robespierre kept Paine in prison as a foreigner, although France had with enthu-

siasm conferred upon him the title of "citizen." In England he was outlawed for his "Rights of Man," written in reply to Burke's attack on France. In the United States of America,—Paine was the first to write the name,—his title to citizenship was the same as Washington's and the other patriots'. Yet the great apostle of liberty remained in prison. He has written a description of the awful times. He tells of how one hundred and sixty-eight persons were taken out of the Luxembourg in one night and all but eight guillotined the next day and he describes how he and his three room mates escaped. The guards used to mark the number to be taken from the different rooms. The door of Paine's room was opened back against the wall when marked, and at night being closed, the mark was on the wrong side and not seen. Robespierre fell, Monroe replaced Morris as minister and he bent every energy to get Paine released. He took him to his house and nursed him back to health, for when he left prison, Monroe wrote, his health was such that he could not live longer than a month, he thought, at the furthest. "I shall pay the utmost attention to this gentleman, as he is one of those whose merits in our Revolution were most distinguished," he wrote.

Paine, after a long wait to recover his health and to avoid England's patrolling fleet in the Channel, returned to America. In the meantime, while under the shadow of the guillotine, he had written the First Part of the Age of Reason, and it was while hovering between life and death that he wrote the Second Part. He wrote, he said, primarily to stop the headlong rush into infidelity in France, for he was a most devoted Deist. "Several of my colleagues have given me the example of making their individual profession of faith. I also will make mine," he wrote. "I believe in one God, and no more, and I hope for happiness beyond this life. I believe in the equality of Man, and I believe that religious duties consist in doing justice, loving mercy and endeavouring to make our fellow-creatures happy." The lawyer asked Christ, saying "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind.

"This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On

these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

It is not within my subject to discuss Paine's religion, but I want to lay these two statements side by side in your mind, that you may see, though others have called Thomas Paine an infidel, his confession of his faith contained all that Jesus Christ said was essential.

Paine, on his return to America, found many bitter political enemies. John Adams and his party, Paine had bitterly opposed; Adams was believed by Paine to desire the establishment of a hereditary office in his family, and both Jefferson and Madison appear to have given serious consideration to the same fear. At any rate, John Adams was fierce in his attacks on Paine and he received in return cutting replies, but even with Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and many other powerful friends, still a broken old man, in only moderate circumstances, he was at terrible odds with the power of the orthodox in religion and a great political party bitter against him. While he was able to strike with his pen he could hold his own, but he had no heir to protect his good name and, as I have shown, his reputation was simply pounced upon and destroyed unscrupulously, and since then each thoughtless writer has quoted and made more blighting the slanders. Mr. Conway has at last refuted every charge; the best and most reliable evidence shows that Paine never drank to excess, except once in Paris, when his friends were being guillotined one after the other, then, afterwards he told a friend, "that borne down by public and private affliction he had been driven to excesses," but the story of his dying a drunkard has been disproved.

Even to this day there are men who seem to be unable to do Paine justice, deeming it necessary, apparently, to follow custom, by neglecting or abusing him. There has been published, within the last five years, a very excellent history of The Declaration of Independence, and many of the letters and statements that I have quoted may be found in that volume, but if you consult it you will find that Paine or "Common Sense" is not to be found in the index until a reference occurs to a sneering statement from John Adams' biography. There are fifteen or more quotations commending and crediting Paine with great power and influence, even one, from John Adams himself, before he became Paine's enemy, but the otherwise very complete

index does not refer to them and the author makes no comment except to Paine's prejudice.

It is not possible, in one afternoon, to give anything like a clear idea of the greatness, the breadth, the nobility of Paine's life and works. When he was called a libeller by the authorities in England for his "Rights of Man," he said, "Let every man read and judge for himself, not only of the merits and demerits of the Work, but of the matters therein contained, which relate to his own interests and happiness. If to expose the fraud and imposition of monarchy, and every species of hereditary government—to lessen the oppression of taxes—to propose plans for the education of helpless infancy, and the comfortable support of the aged and distressed—to endeavour to conciliate nations to each other—to extirpate the horrid practice of war—to promote universal peace, civilization, commerce—and to break the chains of political superstition, and raise degraded man to his proper rank;—if these things be libellous, let me live the life of a libeller, and let the name of Libeller be engraved on my tomb."

Mrs. Bonneville said to the dying Paine: "You will be buried on your farm." "I have no objection to that," he said, "but the farm will be sold and they will dig my bones up before they be half rotten." "Mr. Paine," she replied, "have confidence in your friends. I assure you that the place where you will be buried shall never be sold." Paine's power of prophecy still proved good concerning his bones; their travels and fate is an interesting story of itself.

Your society is now carrying out a part of the promise made to the dying patriot. Here he lived and here a part of his mighty brain still moulders. His heart is lost somewhere on the earth, which may not now be regretted, for living, it beat for the whole world and so, even in death, it happens, no land can claim it. Ah! well may we cherish this spot sacred to Paine the Patriot. Perhaps his dream will come true, and when there is a Republic of the World, here will be the shrine of all nations.



